Dr. Peterson
USG Board of Regents Economic Development Committee Meeting: Introduction of InVenture Prize Runner-up Team
Tuesday, May 20, 2014

Thank you for the opportunity to share with you a couple of the creative inventions our Georgia Tech students have come up with. We believe that in order to solve some of society's most pressing challenges, students need to be taught to be innovative, inside and outside the classroom. Students are an active part of research and discovery, and today over 70 percent of innovation disclosures at Tech name one or more students among the inventors.

In a minute, you'll hear from members of Team Sucette Smart Soother, the runner-up in our recent InVenture Prize competition. InVenture is one of several Georgia Tech programs designed to encourage undergraduate students' interest in invention, innovation and entrepreneurship. In the six years we've had InVenture, 2,400 students have signed up to compete. This year, we had 560 competitors, the most we've ever had. Of those, it came down to six teams in the finals. They were featured on March 27 in a live broadcast on Georgia Public Broadcasting.

The first-place winner and People's Choice Winner was Team Sanivation. They came up with the Safi Choo Toilet, an inexpensive mobile toilet designed to address health and contamination issue for some 2.6 billion people who don't have access to hygienic bathrooms. It could also help millions of people in refugee camps. The team was invited to visit with the committee, but members are in Kenya prototyping their toilet design. They will be asked to attend at another time.

Team Sanivation received $20,000, a free U.S. patent filing by Georgia Tech's Office of Technology Licensing and a spot in this summer's class of Flashpoint, a Georgia Tech startup accelerator program. The team also won the $5,000 People's Choice Award.

Today, I’m proud to introduce Team Sucette Smart Soother. The parents of young children will appreciate their invention. The Sucette Smart Soother is a modernized pacifier tailored to fit the growing dentition of infants. It decreases the adverse dental, skeletal, and speech deformations associated with extended use of current designs. And because it’s “smart,” the pacifier changes color when the baby runs a fever.

Team Sucette Smart Soother received $10,000 and a free U.S. patent filing. All three members are biomedical engineering majors. Rachel Ford is from Powder Springs, Georgia. Esteban Ongini is from Miami, Florida, and Will McAllister is from Charlotte, North Carolina. And now I give you Team Sucette Smart Soother.